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SUBJECT: UNFICYP CONSULTATIONS, DECEMBER 5, 2008

(U) 1. This is an action request. USUN is instructed to draw from the discussion elements below during the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) consultations scheduled for December 5, 2008.

Begin elements:

-The United States welcomes Special Representative Zerihoun to the Council and thanks him for his comprehensive briefing today and for the service that he, as well as Special Advisor Downer, provide to the international community. The United States would also like to recognize the positive leadership of Mr. Christofias and Mr. Talat. It is encouraging that they have taken on primary responsibility for managing the negotiation process and reaching mutual agreement. With this in mind, we would like to make the following points:

-First, the United States welcomes the Secretary General's report and agrees with his recommendation for an extension of UNFICYP's mandate.

-Second, we share the Secretary General's assessment that progress has been made, especially since commencement of the full-fledged negotiations in September. The leaders have met nine times and these meetings have enjoyed a positive and constructive dialogue.

-The United States would also like to emphasize the tremendous goodwill both sides and their leaders have exhibited. In this light, the United States joins the Secretary General in commending both sides for mutually agreeing to cancel their main annual military exercises. We call on the two sides and their leaders to continue to support such gestures and to continue to engage the Cypriot communities to promote unity and understanding.

-Nevertheless, we also urge both sides to build upon the current momentum and to recognize the necessity of intensifying the pace of the negotiations, using the technical committees, working groups, and additional informal consultations as necessary, to facilitate the process. Special Advisor Downer plays a critical role in this regard.

-Third, the United States along with the international community continues to fully support this process which has as its goal the achievement of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation.

-Finally, we would like to stress that a lasting and durable settlement lies with the Cypriot communities themselves. The United States urges the communities to take full advantage of the current unique and auspicious opportunity to achieve even more significant and decisive progress in the near future.

End Elements.
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